

Statement on Handgun Control Legislation *June 21, 1998*

The Justice Department's report on background checks is further proof that the Brady law is working. Since its passage, law enforcement officials have stopped hundreds of thousands of felons, fugitives, and stalkers from buying handguns every year. By keeping guns out of the hands of criminals—and putting more police in our communities—we have helped cut the crime rate to its lowest point in a genera-

tion. We must now extend the Brady law's provisions to violent juveniles and bar them from owning guns for life. I call on Congress once again to pass this needed, commonsense legislation.

NOTE: This statement was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 19 but was embargoed for release until 4:30 p.m. on June 21.

Interview With Chinese Journalists *June 19, 1998*

President's Trip to China

Q. Mr. President, thank you very much for giving us this opportunity to have this interview with you before you fly to China. We're representing Chinese media organizations in the United States. We're following your visit to China very closely. We wish you success in your visit.

The President. Thank you.

Q. May I ask you the first question?

The President. Sure.

Q. You will be the first American President in almost 10 years to visit China. What do you expect from your visit to China? And how important it is? What kind of impact will it have on both the United States and China and even the world as a whole? Thank you.

The President. Well, first of all, I hope that through my trip both I and the people of the United States will learn more about China—about the rich history, about the exciting events going on today, about the incredible potential for the future of the Chinese people.

Secondly, I hope through my trip that the leaders and the people of China will learn more about the United States. And specifically, I hope that through my trip we can expand the areas of cooperation between our Governments and our people. I hope we can have an open and honest and constructive discussion about the differences we have. And I hope that the trip will give energy to the positive changes going on

in China and to a better partnership between our people in the future.

China-U.S. Partnership

Q. Mr. President, you and President Jiang Zemin have agreed to work together in building a constructive strategic partnership between our two great nations for the 21st century. I remember this concept, partnership, was first raised by you during a visit to Australia a few years ago.

The President. Yes.

Q. So what was your vision then, and your vision now, for this concept?

The President. Well, first of all, I think it's—let's make the big statement here. China is home to one-fourth of the world's people. It has a rapidly growing economy. It has enormous contributions to make to the world of the 21st century. And if I could just give some specific examples, I think we should be partners for stability and security in Asia. The Chinese recently led our five-party talks on the situation in South Asia as a result of the nuclear testing between—by India and Pakistan. That's just one example. The work we're doing to promote peace on the Korean Peninsula is another. The work we're doing together to try to promote stability and to restore growth to the economies of Asia is another.

I think there are important issues in the security relationship between our two countries that should be a part of this partnership. I think